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1844, The Most Noble the Marquis of Downshire.

1845, Robert S. Bradshaw, Esq.

„ Thomas Davis, Esq.

„ Sir Richard Franklin,

There are therefore now on the books of the Academy, 162 life Members, and 203 annual Members.

The President delivered the following Address :

“MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN OF THE ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY,—
Although it is, I believe, well known to most, perhaps to all, of you, that it has been for a considerable time my wish and intention to retire this evening from the Chair to which, in 1837, your kindness called me, on the still lamented event of the death of my distinguished predecessor, the late admirable Doctor Lloyd, and in which your continuing confidence has since replaced me on eight successive occasions, yet a few parting words from me may be allowed, perhaps expected; and I should wish to offer them, were it only to guard against the possibility of any one's supposing that I look upon my thus retiring from your Chair as a step unimportant to myself, or as one which might be taken by me with indifference, or without deliberation. It was under no hasty impulse that I resolved to retire from the office of your President into the ranks of your private members, nor was it lightly that I determined to lay down the highest honour of my life.

“My reasons have been stated in an Address delivered in another place, at a meeting of some members of your body. They are, briefly, these: that after the expiration of several years, I have found the duties of the office press too heavily upon my energies, indeed, of late, upon my health, when combined with other duties; and that I have felt the anxieties of a concentrated responsibility—exaggerated, perhaps, by an ardent or excitable temperament—tend more to distract my thoughts from the calm pursuits of study, than I can judge to be desirable or right in itself, or consistent with the full redeeming of those pledges which I may be considered to have long since given, as an early Contributor to your Transactions.

“When I look back on the aspirations with which first I entered

on that office from which I am now about to retire, it humbles me to reflect how far short I have come of realizing my own ideal; but it cheers me to remember how greatly beyond what I could then have ventured to anticipate, the Academy itself has flourished. Of this result I may speak with little fear, because little is attributable to myself. Gladly do I acknowledge that it has been my good fortune, rather than my merit, to have presided over your body during a period in which, through the exertions of others much more than through my own (though mine, too, have not been withheld), the Academy is generally felt to have prospered in all its departments. The original papers which have been read; the volumes of Transactions which have been published; the closer communication which has been established with kindred societies of our own and of foreign countries; the enhanced value of our Library and Museum, which have been, at least, as much enriched in the quality as in the quantity of their contents; the improved state (as it is represented to me) of our finances, combined with an increased strength of our claims on public and parliamentary support; the heightened interest of members and visitors in our meetings, which have been honoured on four occasions, during my presidency, by the presence of representatives of Royalty; even the convenience and appropriate adornment of the rooms in which we assemble;—all these are things, and others might be named, in which, however small may have been the share of him who now addresses you, the progress of the Academy has not been small, and of which the recollection tends to console one who may, at least, be allowed to call himself an attached member of the body, under the sense, very deeply felt by him, of his own personal and official deficiencies.

“Whoever may be the member elected by your suffrages, this evening, to occupy that important and honourable post which I am now about to resign, it will, of course, become my duty to give to that future President my faithful and cordial support, by any means within the compass of my humble power. But if it be true, as I collect it to be, that your unanimous choice will fall upon the very member whom, out of all others, I should have myself selected, if it could have been mine to make the selection—with whom I have been long connected by the closest ties of college friendship, strengthened by the earnest sympathy

which we have felt in our aspirations for the welfare of this Academy which has already benefited by his exertions in many and important ways—then will that course, which would have been in any event my *duty*, be in an eminent degree my *pleasure* also.

“ And now, my Lords and Gentlemen, understanding that an old and respected member is prepared to propose for your votes, as my successor, the friend to whom I have ventured to allude—very inadequately, as regards my opinion of his merits, yet, perhaps, more pointedly than his modesty will entirely forgive or approve of,—I shall detain you no longer from that stage of the proceedings of the evening which must be the most interesting to all of us, but shall conclude these words of farewell from this Chair, by expressing a hope that my future exertions, though in a less conspicuous position, shall manifest, at least in some degree, that grateful and affectionate sense which I must ever retain of the constant confidence and favour which you have, at all times, shewn towards me.”

RESOLVED,—That the thanks of the Academy be given to Sir William R. Hamilton, and that the Academy desire to express their entire sense of the value of his services as President, of his high and impartial bearing in the Chair, and of his untiring efforts to advance the interests of the body; and they also wish to record their satisfaction that he has determined to remain in the Council of the Academy.

The ballot for the Annual Election having closed, the scrutineers reported that the following gentlemen were elected Officers and Council for the ensuing year:

President—Rev. Humphrey Lloyd, D.D.

Treasurer—Robert Ball, Esq.

Librarian—Rev. William H. Drummond, D.D.

Clerk and Assistant Librarian—Edward Clibborn.

Committee of Science.

Rev. Franc Sadleir, D.D., Provost; James Apjohn, M.D.; James Mac Cullagh, LL.D.; Robert Ball, Esq.;